Statement by

Mr. Paul McHale,

Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense

Before the 108th Congress

House Subcommittee on Terrorism, Unconventional Threats and Capabilities

U.S. House of Representatives

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Introduction

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee: I appreciate the opportunity to meet with you on the critical subject of our nation's security

As the President said, on the eve of the standup of the new Department of Homeland Security, "The world changed on September the 11th, 2001. We learned that a threat that gathers on the other side of the earth can strike our own cities and kill our own citizens. It's an important lesson; one we must never forget. Oceans no longer protect America from the dangers of this world. We're protected by daily vigilance at home. And we will be protected by resolute and decisive action against threats abroad."

"We're tracking down terrorists who hate America, one by one. We're on the hunt. We [have] them on the run. And it's a matter of time before they learn the meaning of American justice. We're opposing terror regimes that are arming with weapons of mass destruction to threaten the peace and freedom of this world. And we're taking unprecedented measures to defend the homeland with the largest reorganization of our government in more than a half a century.

At home and abroad, the Department of Defense is a significant contributor in this national effort to secure our nation and its people.

The Department is prosecuting the war on terrorism abroad. The President understands that a terrorist can attack at any time, at any place, using any conceivable technique. He also understands that it is physically impossible to defend against every conceivable threat in every place, at every time

To successfully defend against terrorism, and other 21st century threats, requires that we take the war to the enemy. And the task of the Department is to put pressure on

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Military civil support includes domestic disaster relief operations that occur during fires, hurricanes, floods, and earthquakes. Support also includes counter-drug operations and consequence management assistance, such as would occur after a terrorist event employing a weapon of mass destruction.

Second, the Fiscal Year 2003 National Defense Authorization Act directed the establishment of an "Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense." I am honored and thankful to have been nominated by the President and confirmed by the Senate to serve as the first Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense.

In accordance with Section 902 of Public Law 107-314, the Bob Stump National Defense Authorization Act of 2003, my principal duty is "the overall supervision of the homeland defense activities of the Department of Defense." My charge, as given to me by law, by the Secretary of Defense, and by the President is to lead and focus the Department's activities in homeland defense and homeland security, ensure internal coordination of DoD policy direction, provide guidance to Northern Command for its homeland defense mission and its military activities in support of homeland security, to include support to civil authorities, and to coordinate with the Homeland Security Council (HSC), the National Security Council (NSC), the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and other government agencies. In layman's terms, I am responsible for recommending to the Secretary the roadmap and the "rules of the road" for the Defense Department's future role in securing our nation at home.

Third, the Fiscal Year 2003 National Defense Authorization Act also directed the establishment of an "Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence."

The Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence will have the primary responsibilities to assure that the senior leadership of the Department and Combatant

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Thank you, Mr Ch